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ABSTRACT

By 1890 the legendary outlaws of the 1870s and 1880s were mostly dead or in prison. When Luther Perkins erected his new bank building in Coffeyville, Kansas, a bank robbery was the farthest thing from his mind. But the Dalton cousins, former Coffeyville residents, were interested in the bank because they wanted to outdo the James gang by using the town as a setting for a spectacular double bank robbery. The robbery ended, however, with four of the five outlaws dead. Coffeyville became famous in the nation as the town that stopped the Daltons. This lesson is based on a National Register of Historic Places file, on studies of outlaws of the U.S. West, and on a contemporary description of the robbery. The lesson can be used in U.S. history, social studies, and geography courses and in units on the post-Civil War era, the settlement and culture of the West, or Kansas history. It cites educational objectives and lists materials needed. It is divided into eight sections: (1) "About This Lesson"; (2) "Getting Started: Inquiry Question"; (3) "Setting the Stage: Historical Context"; (4) "Locating the Site: Maps" (Coffeyville, Kansas and Surrounding Area); (5) "Determining the Facts: Readings" (Renegades and Outlaws; Dalton Gang; People of Coffeyville Say 'Enough!'); (6) "Visual Evidence: Images" (C.M. Condon and Company Bank, 1892; Condon Bank after the Attempted Robbery; 'Death Alley,' Coffeyville, Kansas; Bodies of the Dalton Gang After the Shoot-Out; Condon National Bank Building Today); (7) "Putting It All Together: Activities" (Myth of the Outlaw; Taking the Law into Our Own Hands; Locally Famous Events in the Community); and (8) "Supplementary Resources." (BT)

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Coffeyville, Kansas: The Town That Stopped the Dalton Gang

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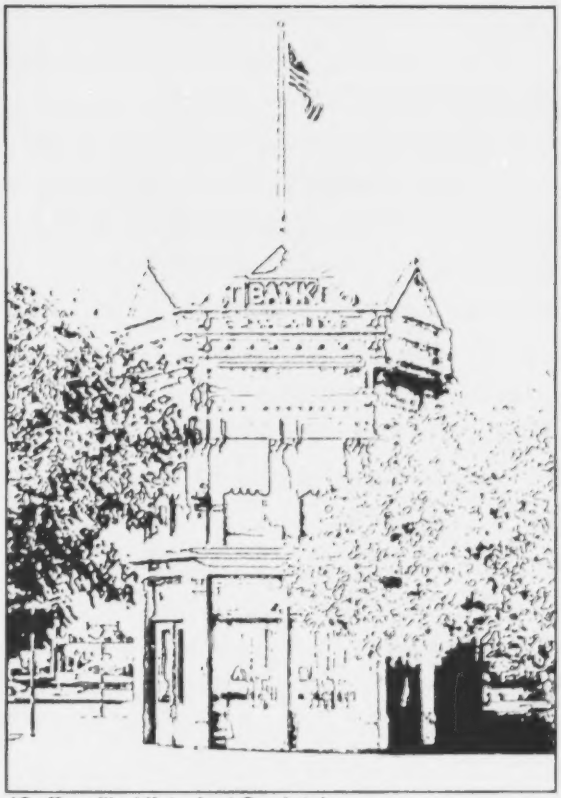
Coffeyville, Kansas: The Town That Stopped the Dalton Gang

When Luther Perkins erected his new building in Coffeyville, Kansas, in 1890, a bank robbery was the farthest thing from his mind. Like his fellow citizens, he felt the town had come of age. The design of the new building would convey the permanence and elegance a proper town should display. It would house needed businesses, professional offices, and the new C. M. Condon and Company Bank.



(Coffeyville Historical Society)

The difficult years seemed to be over: the violence over slavery, the bloody Civil War, and the nearly 30 years of lawlessness that characterized the post-Civil War period. The legendary outlaws of the 1870s and 1880s were mostly dead, in prison, or keeping a low profile. Cole Younger was serving a 25-year sentence for his part in a bank robbery attempt. From his prison cell he warned young people against a life of violence and crime, but his Dalton cousins would not listen. These former Coffeyville residents were interested in the new bank for reasons quite different from those of Luther Perkins. Bob Dalton planned to outdo the James boys by using the town as the setting for a spectacular double bank robbery. The robbery ended, however, with four of the five outlaws dead. Coffeyville became famous all over the country as the "town that stopped the Daltons."

This lesson is based on the Condon National Bank, one of the thousands of historic districts listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

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About This Lesson

This lesson is based on the National Register of Historic Places registration file, "Condon National Bank," on studies of outlaws in the American West, and on a contemporary description of the robbery. Kathleen Hunter, an education consultant, wrote *Coffeyville, Kansas: The Town that Stopped the Dalton Gang.* Fay Metcalf, Marilyn Harper, and the Teaching with Historic Places staff edited the lesson. TwHP is sponsored, in part, by the Cultural Resources Training Initiative and Parks as Classrooms programs of the National Park Service. This lesson is one in a series that brings the important stories of historic places into classrooms across the country.

Where it fits into the curriculum

Topics: The lesson could be used in American history, social studies, and geography courses in units on the post-Civil War era, settlement and culture of the West, or Kansas history. It could also be used in a government unit on law and order.

Time period: Late 19th century

See attached **Relevant United States History Standards for Grades 5-12**

Objectives for students

1) To analyze the historic, cultural, and social conditions that contributed to the rise of outlaws in the middle-border states.

2) To examine the activities of the Dalton brothers and their gang.

3) To describe how the residents of Coffeyville defended themselves against the gang.

4) To investigate their own community for evidence of locally famous events and properties associated with them.

Materials for students

The materials listed below either can be used directly on the computer or can be printed out, photocopied, and distributed to students.

1) one map showing the location of Coffeyville and other sites relating to the Dalton Gang;

2) three readings on outlaws in the middle-border states, the Dalton Gang, and the Condon Bank robbery;

3) five photographs of the Condon National Bank and the aftermath of the robbery.

Note: One of the photographs included in this lesson (Photo 4) shows the bodies of the Dalton Gang on display after the attempted robbery. Teachers are advised that this image may not be appropriate for younger students.

Visiting the site

The Condon National Bank building is now the home of the Coffeyville Chamber of Commerce. It is located 2 blocks north of the junction of Routes 166 and 169 in Coffeyville, Kansas. The building is open during business hours. There are no guided tours, but visitors can see how the Condon Bank and its vault appeared in 1892.

The Dalton Defenders Museum, operated by the Coffeyville Historical Society, contains memorabilia related to the Dalton gang and the shoot-out at the Condon National Bank. For more information, contact the Coffeyville Historical Society, P.O. Box 843, Coffeyville, KS, 67337, or visit their web site at [**www.coffeyville.com/Historical%20Society.htm**].

United States History Standards for Grades 5-12
Coffeyville, Kansas:
The Town That Stopped the Dalton Gang
relates to the following National Standards for History:

Era 4: Expansion and Reform (1801-1861)

- Standard 2E- The student understands the settlement of the West.
- Standard 3B- The student understands how the debates over slavery influenced politics and sectionalism.

Era 6: The Development of the Industrial United States (1870-1900)

- Standard 4A- The student understands various perspectives on federal Indian policy, westward expansion, and the resulting struggles

Getting Started

Inquiry Question

(Kansas State Historical Society)

What do you think caused the damage to this building?

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How to Use the Inquiry Question

Begin each lesson by asking students to discuss possible answers to the inquiry question that accompanies the Getting Started image. To facilitate a whole class discussion, you may want to print the page and use it to make an overhead transparency. The purpose of the exercise is to engage students' interest in the lesson's topic by raising questions that can be answered as they complete the lesson.

Rather than serving merely as illustrations for the text, images are documents that play an integral role in helping students achieve the lesson's objectives.

To assist students in learning how to "read" visual materials, you may want to begin this section by having them complete the Photo Analysis Worksheet for one or more of the photos. The worksheet is appropriate for analyzing both historical and modern photographs and will help students develop a valuable skill.

Photo Analysis Worksheet

Step 1:

Examine the photograph for 10 seconds. How would you describe the photograph?

Step 2:

Divide the photograph into quadrants and study each section individually. What details--such as people, objects, activities--do you notice?

Step 3:

What other information--such as time period, location, season, reason photo was taken--can you gather from the photo?

Step 4:

How would you revise your first description of the photo using the information noted in Steps 2 and 3?

Step 5:

What questions do you have about the photograph? How might you find answers to these questions?

Setting the Stage

In 1892--the year the infamous Dalton Gang attempted to rob two Coffeyville, Kansas banks--Kansas already had a long history of violence. The area had been acquired from France in 1803 as part of the Louisiana Purchase. The American Indian tribes living there were soon forced out by cattle herders and other settlers from Texas and Missouri. The approach of the Civil War brought further conflict. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 prohibited slavery in the northern part of the Louisiana Purchase. In 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Act established the territories of Kansas and Nebraska and provided that the people living there should determine for themselves whether slavery would be permitted or not. While people in Nebraska Territory quickly chose to prohibit slavery, the settlers of Kansas Territory were bitterly divided. In 1856, the territory became known as "Bleeding Kansas" because of the violent clashes between pro- and anti-slavery factions.

Kansas entered the Union as a free state on the eve of the Civil War. Like the other middle border states of Missouri and Arkansas and the Indian Territory (now the state of Oklahoma), it held people with strong southern sympathies as well as people who just as strongly supported the Union. Violent men used the war as an excuse to loot and murder. Their legacy created a new culture of lawlessness in the post-Civil War era when outlaws such as Frank and Jesse James and Cole and Jim Younger terrorized citizens.

As the end of the 19th century approached, the citizens of Kansas looked forward to the progress and prosperity that the new 20th century seemed to promise. Most of the notorious outlaws of the 1870s and 80s were dead or in prison by this time. The Dalton Gang, however, was alive and well. At Coffeyville, in 1892, the outlaws and the citizens of the town clashed in the course of a daring bank robbery.

Locating the Site

Map 1: Coffeyville, Kansas, and surrounding area.

American Indian tribes had dwelled in what was known as Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) since the 1830s when they were unwillingly moved there by the federal government. In 1889, over protest by Indian tribes, Congress opened up two million acres in this region for settlement. Thousands of people poured into the area to claim land. That same year, the Dalton family--including the three grown sons who would soon become outlaws--left their home in Coffeyville, Kansas and claimed homestead land near Kingfisher in the newly-opened Oklahoma Territory.

Questions for Map 1

1. Locate the states of Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas on a U.S. map. Why do you think these states were called the middle border states? According to what you have learned so far, what legacy did the violence of the Civil War create in this region?

2. Locate Oklahoma on a U.S. map. Why was this region once referred to as Indian Territory? When was it opened for non-Indian settlement?

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3. Locate Coffeyville on Map 1. How would you describe its location? Why might the Dalton brothers and their gang have chosen Coffeyville as the target for a bank robbery?

4. Locate Kingfisher, Oklahoma and suggest reasons why the Dalton family moved to this area.

5. Locate the towns of Perry, Orlando, Adair, and Red Rock in Oklahoma--all associated with train robberies committed by the Dalton Gang in 1891 and 1892. What generalizations can you make about the Dalton Gang's robberies based on the locations where they occurred?

Determining the Facts

Reading 1: Renegades and Outlaws

One of the legacies of the Civil War in Kansas and Missouri was a new culture of lawlessness. Some of the gangs that operated in the middle border states between the Civil War and the start of the 20th century were connected by blood ties; others by personal relationships. Gang leaders often recruited their younger brothers and family friends as members. The heritage and tradition of outlawry were handed down from generation to generation.

The story begins with William Clarke Quantrill. Before the Civil War he was known as a tough fighter who liked power. He was a racist and a supporter of slavery, but played a double game. In Lawrence, Kansas, he used the name "Charley Hart" and posed as an abolitionist. When he was in Missouri, he met with and supported pro-slavery groups. He made many trips back and forth between the two states, stealing horses in Missouri to sell in Kansas and kidnapping free African Americans in Kansas to sell into slavery in Missouri. When war came, he joined the Confederate army and organized guerilla troops that soon became famous as renegades. "Quantrill's Raiders" shot Union sympathizers in their homes, fields, and towns. On August 21, 1863, they murdered 142 people in Lawrence, Kansas, with no military justification at all. Angered by such undisciplined violence, the Confederate commander of the area, Gen. James Totten, expelled Quantrill from the army and declared him an outlaw.

Leaders in the Union Amy then made a terrible mistake. In an effort to stop the violence, they ordered all the people living in a large area in Missouri along the Kansas border off their land, forcing them to leave most of their possessions behind. Many of these people fled to Kansas. This evacuation was meant to punish Quantrill and his supporters, but it antagonized even Union sympathizers. And it did not stop Quantrill's raiders. They not only continued their murderous ways, but they also gathered new recruits.

Among the members of Quantrill's band were Frank James and his younger brother, Jesse, who had once proved his toughness by killing eight men in one day. Jesse James claimed he was forced into outlawry because his family had been persecuted in the war. Because they too had felt persecuted by the Union army, local people did not inform on him or his gang members. The James' first cousins, Cole and Jim Younger, were also part of Quantrill's gang. The Youngers came from a well-off, pro-slavery family. When Union forces killed their father and burned down their house, they were eager to retaliate. When Quantrill was killed by Union guerillas in 1865, Jesse James took over the gang. He followed the pattern Quantrill had established: "hard riding, hard shooting, using a network

of hideouts, [stealing money and other] loot as an objective, and murder without compassion." The James and Younger gangs rampaged through the countryside of the middle border from 1866 to 1882. They also became the training school for later outlaws, including the Dalton brothers.

Questions for Reading 1

1. Why did Quantrill move back and forth between Kansas and Missouri? How would you describe his behavior as a private citizen? as a Confederate army officer? At what point do you think he became an outlaw?

2. Why was he discharged from the army in disgrace? How do you think Quantrill justified his killing of Union sympathizers?

3. What unintended results came from the Union Army order evacuating people from the Kansas/Missouri border region?

4. What do you think of Jesse James's claim that he became an outlaw because he had been persecuted? Discuss your answer with your classmates.

Reading 1 was compiled from Paul I. Wellman, A Dynasty of Western Outlaws *(1961; reprint Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986); and Richard White, "Outlaw Gangs of the Middle-Border: American Social Bandits,"* Western Historical Quarterly 12 *(October 1981): 387-408.*

Determining the Facts

Reading 2: The Dalton Gang

The Dalton family came from Jackson County, Missouri. Lewis Dalton was a saloon keeper in Kansas City, Kansas, when he married Adeline Younger, the aunt of Cole and Jim Younger. By 1882 the family lived in northeast Oklahoma, and by 1886 they had moved to Coffeyville in southeast Kansas. When the Oklahoma Territory opened for settlement in 1889, the family claimed homestead land near Kingfisher. Thirteen of the couple's 15 children survived to maturity. One son, Frank, was a U.S. Deputy Marshal who was killed in the line of duty in 1887. Perhaps hoping to avenge their brother's death, the three younger Dalton boys--Grattan (b. 1861), Bob (b. 1869), and Emmett (b. 1871)--became lawmen. But in 1890, the boys moved to the other side of the law.

Bob Dalton was always the wild one. He killed a man for the first time when he was just 19. He was a deputy at the time and claimed the killing was in the line of duty. Some suspected, however, that the victim had tried to take away Bob's girl. In March 1890, Bob was charged with introducing liquor into Indian Territory (now Oklahoma), but he jumped bail and did not appear for his trial. In September 1890, Grat was arrested for stealing horses--a lynching offense in a time when horses provided the main mode of transportation--but either the charges were dropped or he was released.

Discredited as lawmen, the Daltons soon formed their first gang. Bob recruited George "Bitter Creek" Newcomb, Bill McElhanie, and "Blackfaced Charley" Bryant to ride with him and his brother Emmett. Bryant received his nickname because of a gunpowder burn on one cheek. Grat Dalton was visiting his brother Bill in California when the gang was formed, but joined it later, as did Bill Doolin, Dick Broadwell, and Bill Powers. Their first robbery target was a gambling house in Silver City, New Mexico.

On February 6, 1891, after Bob Dalton had joined his brothers in California, a Southern Pacific passenger train was held up. The Daltons were accused of the robbery, based on little evidence. Bob escaped and Bill was acquitted, but Grat was arrested, convicted, and put on a train headed for a 20-year prison sentence. According to one account, Grat was handcuffed to one deputy and accompanied by another. After the train had gone some distance, one deputy fell asleep and the other busied himself talking to other passengers. As it was a hot day, all the windows were open. Suddenly, Grat jumped up and dived head first out of the train window. He landed in the San Joaquin River, disappeared under water, and was carried downstream by the current. The deputies were astounded. Grat must have taken the key to the handcuffs from the first deputy's pocket as he slept and then timed his escape to take place when he knew the

train would be on a bridge. If he had landed on the ground, he would almost certainly have been killed. Somehow he found his brothers and made his way back to Oklahoma Territory.

The Dalton brothers were now professional outlaws. Between May 1891 and July 1892 they robbed four trains in Indian Territory. On May 9, 1891, the men held up a Santa Fe train at Wharton (now Perry). They only got away with several hundred dollars, but they had worked well as a team. As they passed Orlando, they stole eight or nine horses. A posse soon took out after them, but the gang escaped.

Four months later the Dalton gang robbed a train of $10,000 at Lillietta in Indian Territory. In June 1892, they stopped another Santa Fe train, this time at Red Rock. Blackfaced Charley Bryant and Dick Broadwell held the engineer and fireman in the locomotive. Bob and Emmett Dalton and Bill Powers walked through the passenger cars, robbing the passengers as they went. Bill Doolin and Grat Dalton took on the express car. They threw the safe out of the train. Then with loot in hand, the robbers whooped and rode away. They gained little for their efforts--a few hundred dollars and some watches and jewelry from the passengers. The gang scattered after the Red Rock robbery, but it wasn't long until Blackfaced Charley was caught and killed in an escape attempt.

The gang struck again in July at Adair near the Arkansas border. They went directly to the train station and took what they could find in the express and baggage rooms. Then they calmly sat down on a bench on the platform, talking and smoking, with their Winchester rifles across their knees. When the train came in at 9:45 p.m., they backed a wagon up to the express car and unloaded all the contents. There was a large armed guard on the train, but for some reason all 11 men were at the back of the train. The guards fired at the bandits through the car windows and from behind the train. In the gun fight, 200 shots were fired. None of the Dalton gang was hit. Three guards were wounded and a town doctor was killed by a stray bullet. The robbers dropped out of sight, probably hiding out in one of several caves near Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The gang could have kept themselves busy with train robberies, but Bob Dalton wanted to make sure his name would long be remembered. He would, he claimed, "beat anything Jesse James ever did--rob two banks at once, in broad daylight." On October 5, 1892, the Dalton Gang attempted this feat when they set out to rob the C.M. Condon & Company's Bank and the First National Bank in Coffeyville, Kansas.

Questions for Reading 2

1. What profession did the three younger Dalton brothers originally pursue? When did they become outlaws? What types of crimes were they suspected of committing in 1890?

2. Why was stealing horses considered such a serious crime?

3. How did Grat avoid a prison term? Do you think the account could be accurate? Why or why not?

4. How long a period did the Dalton Gang spend robbing trains? How successful did they appear to be? What crime did they decide to commit in Coffeyville, Kansas?

5. Why did the Adair robbery lead Bob Dalton to think he could "beat anything Jesse James ever did"?

Reading 2 was compiled from Paul I. Wellman, A Dynasty of Western Outlaws, *(1961; reprint, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986); and Richard White, "Outlaw Gangs of the Middle Border: American Social Bandits,"* Western Historical Quarterly 12 *(October 1981):387-408.*

Determining the Facts

Reading 3: The People of Coffeyville Say "Enough!"

On Friday, October 7, 1892, the [Coffeyville] Journal published a detailed account of the Dalton Gang's last battle that had taken place two days before:

DALTONS! The Robber Gang Meet Their Waterloo in Coffeyville. The Outlaws Beaten at Their Own Game.

The fifth of October, 1892, will be marked in the history of the city of Coffeyville, in fact in the current history of the country, as the date on which one of the most remarkable occurrences of the age took place. Between 9:30 and 10:00 on Wednesday morning, [five men], armed to the teeth and apparently disguised, rode boldly [into town]. They entered an alley and hitched their horses to the fence. They quickly formed into a sort of military line, three in front and two in the rear. Aleck McKenna was in front of his place of business when the men came out of the alley, and they passed within five feet of where he was standing. He recognized one of them as a member of the Dalton family. The men quickened their pace and three of them went into C. M. Condon & Co.'s bank while two ran directly across the street to the First National bank. The next thing that greeted Mr. McKenna's eyes was a Winchester pointed toward the cashier's counter in the [Condon] bank. He called out that "the bank was being robbed." The cry was taken up and quickly passed from lip to lip all around the square. The unwelcome visitors in this bank were in plain view of a score or more people on the plaza.

Grat Dalton, disguised by a black moustache and side whiskers, led the raid on Condon and Co.'s bank. He sternly commanded the clerk to hand over the cash on hand, and urged him to be quick about it. The robber gathered up the funds and carelessly stuffed them in the inside of his vest. One of the other men passed into the office. He ordered Mr. C. M. Ball, the cashier, to bring the money out of the safe. Mr. Ball told him that the time lock was on and that he could not get into the money chest. The fellow told him that he would have to get into it, or he would be compelled to kill him. [The robber] inquired how soon the time lock would open. Mr. Ball told him that it was set for 9:45. "That is only three minutes yet, and I will wait," replied the intruder. Before the three minutes had expired, firing began on the outside of the bank, and the bullets began to come through the plate glass windows. All three men rushed out in the direction of the alley where their horses were hitched.

It may be stated in this connection, that Mr. Ball's story about the time lock was purely fictitious. It was set for eight o'clock and had opened at that hour. The fact

that there was over forty thousand dollars in the chest influenced the cool headed cashier to lie to the burglar.

Bob Dalton, the acknowledged leader of the outfit, disguised by false moustache and goatee, accompanied by his youngest brother, Emmett, entered the First National bank. They covered the teller and the cashier with their Winchesters and, addressing the cashier by name, directed him to hand over all the money in the bank. The cashier very deliberately handed over the currency and gold on the counter, making as many deliveries as possible, in order to secure delay in hope of help arriving. The money [was] stuffed into a common grain sack and carefully tied up. [At the sound of] a shot from outside, [the bandits went] out through the back door of the bank. Just at this juncture, Lucius M. Baldwin came out of Isham's hardware story. Bob Dalton drew up his Winchester, fired, and Baldwin fell dying in the alley. Bob Dalton raised his gun and fired in the direction of the bank, and George Cubine, a man who had been his acquaintance and friend in former years, fell dead. Reaching the middle of the street, he fired another shot, and Charles Brown fell. Bob Dalton raised his gun and fired the fourth shot. His victim this time was Thomas Ayers, cashier of the First National bank. Emmett Dalton had run ahead of Bob with the grain sack containing over $21,000 over his shoulder. Bob and Emmett joined Grat Dalton and his party in the alley. It was at this point, in this now historic alley, that the daring highwaymen met their doom.

In the meantime, as many citizens as could so do, had procured arms and secured positions where they could command the point of retreat of the highwaymen. H. H: Isham and L. A. Deitz had stationed themselves behind two cook stoves near the door of the hardware store. A dozen men with Winchesters and shot guns made a barricade of some wagons. The robbers had to run the gauntlet of three hundred feet with their backs to a dozen Winchesters in the hands of men who knew how to use them. The firing was rapid and incessant for about three minutes, when the cry went up; "They are all down." Several men who had been pressing close after the robbers sprang into the alley and covering them with their guns ordered them to hold up their hands. One hand went up in a feeble manner. Three of the robbers were dead and the fourth helpless. Between the bodies of two of the dead highwaymen, lying upon his face, was Marshal T. Connelly, the bravest of all the brave men who had joined in resisting the terrible raiders in their attempt to rob the banks. Dead and dying horses and smoking Winchesters on the ground added to the horrors of the scene. Tearing the disguises from the faces, the ghastly features of Gratton and Bob Dalton, former residents of Coffeyville and well know to many of our citizens, were revealed. The other dead body proved to be that of Tom Evans, whilst the wounded man was Emmett Dalton, the youngest brother of the two principals of the notorious gang.

It was well known that one of the party had escaped, and a posse was hastily organized and started in pursuit. [In] a half mile, they came upon the bandit lying

[dead] beside the road. He proved to be John Moore, the "Texas Jack" of the gang. His proper name was Richard Broadwell, and he was one of the most experienced and coolest of the gang. The dead raiders were put in the city jail.

Not over fifteen guns were actively engaged in the fight of Wednesday on both sides and the engagement lasted about ten minutes. Eight persons were killed and three wounded.

The unfounded reports that have been sent out by excited newspaper correspondents to the effect that the citizens were anticipating a visit from the Dalton gang is a canard of the worst kind, and is a reflection upon the courage and promptness to act on the part of our people. When the robbers were discovered, there was not a single, solitary armed man anywhere upon the square or in the neighborhood. Even Marshal Connelly had lain his pistol aside. Every gun that was used, with the exception of that brought into action by George Cubine, was procured in the hardware store and loaded and brought into play under the pressure of the great exigency that was upon the people. The citizens of Coffeyville who were killed in the terrible engagement with the Daltons were each one engaged in the fight, and were not innocent bystanders. Our people are adept in the business of resisting law-breakers, and they will do their duty, though it costs blood.

The smoke of Wednesday's terrific battle with the bandits has blown aside, but the excitement occasioned by the wonderful event has increased until it has gained a fever heat. The trains have brought hundreds of visitors to the scene of the bloody conflict between a desperate and notorious gang of experienced highwaymen and a brave and determined lot of citizens who had the nerve to preserve their rights and protect their property under the most trying circumstances.

The Dalton gang is no more, and travelers through the Indian Territory can go right along without fear now. The country, and the railroads and express companies especially, can breathe easier now that the Daltons are wiped out. The country is rid of the desperate gang, but the riddance cost Coffeyville some of its best blood.

Questions for Reading 3

1. What alerted Aleck McKenna to what was going on? What action did he take?

2. Why was a three minute delay so critical?

3. Why were the townspeople able to respond to McKenna's alarm so quickly?

4. Why do you think the author of this account is so anxious to deny reports that the citizens of Coffeyville were expecting the Daltons?

5. Why do you think the headline said that the Dalton's were "beaten at their own game"?

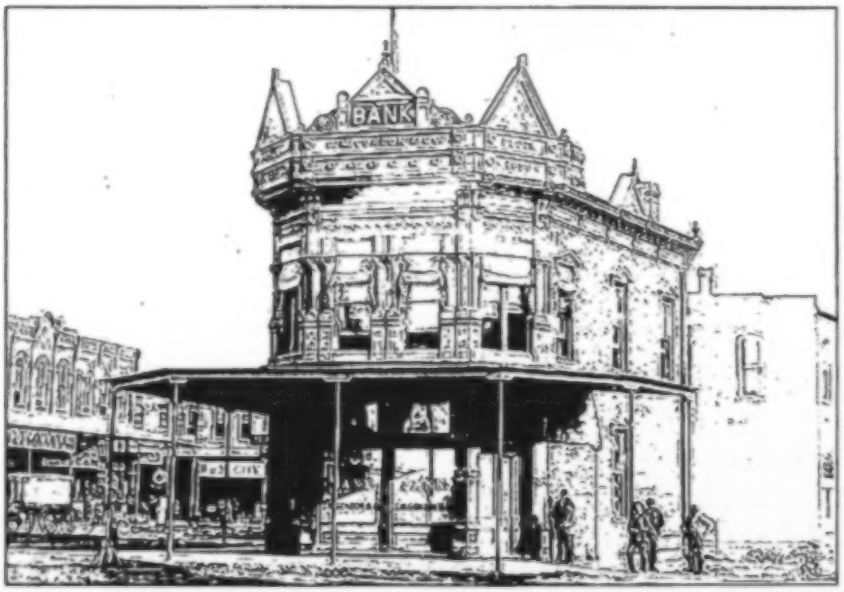
6. What happened after the robbery? Why?

7. The account says that the citizens of Coffeyville were "defending their rights and protecting their property." What do you think that means?

Reading 3 was excerpted from an article published in The [Coffeyville] Journal, *on Friday, October 7, 1892.*

Visual Evidence

Photo 1: C. M. Condon and Company Bank, Coffeyville, Kansas, 1892.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

By the 1890s, Coffeyville, Kansas, was a prosperous trading and milling center for a rich farming region. C. M. Condon and Co. was one of two banks in the town. The Condon bank was located in the Perkins Block, which housed professional offices and stores. The building was constructed in 1890 and occupied a prominent position on the plaza in the center of town . The two sides of the wedge-shaped building are brick and the elaborate details of the front are stamped metal.

Questions for Photo 1

1. Why do you think the residents of Coffeyville were proud of this building?

2. Why do you think the town might have needed two banks? Why might the Dalton's have selected Coffeyville for a robbery?

3. Study the image carefully. What can you learn about the time period? What can you learn about the town?

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4. Why do you think Glass and Parker, photographers in Coffeyville, made a kind of postcard of this view?

Visual Evidence

Photo 2: The front of the Condon Bank after the attempted robbery.

(Kansas State Historical Society)

This photo shows the entrance to the Condon Bank after the gun fight. According to the newspaper account, the citizens of Coffeyville "poured about 80 shots into the windows of Condon's bank" and the gang members shot back at least twice.

Questions for Photo 2

1. How many bullet holes can you find? Can you tell whether the shots were fired by the robbers or by the citizens? How?

2. Can you see the man inside the bank through the window? The newspaper said that people in the plaza could clearly see the robbers inside the bank. Why do you think none of the robbers was killed in the bank?

3. Why do you think newspapers all across the country printed this photo?

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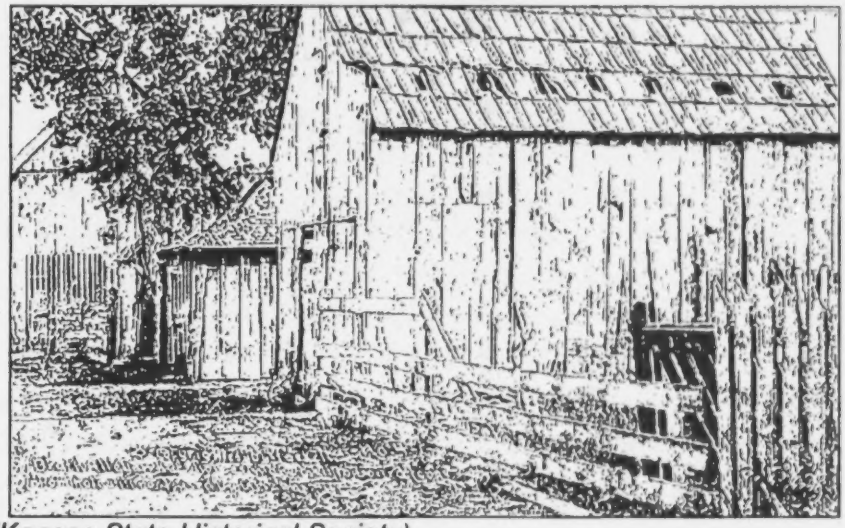
Visual Evidence

Photo 3: "Death Alley," Coffeyville, Kansas.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

This photo appeared on a postcard showing where the robbers tied up their horses before the robbery and where the gang members were shot down.

Questions for Photo 3

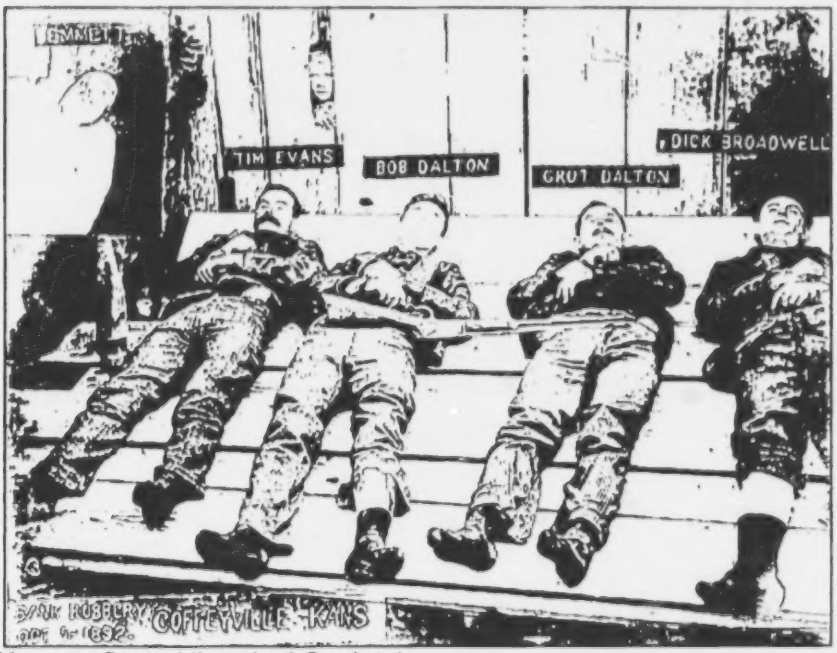
1. Does this image add to your understanding of what happened during the Dalton Gang's attempted robbery? If so, how?

2. If you were a citizen of Coffeyville at the time of the robbery, would you have purchased a postcard like this? Why or why not?

3. If you were a visitor to Coffeyville after the robbery, would you have purchased a postcard like this? Why or why not?

Visual Evidence

Photo 4: Bodies of the Dalton Gang after the shoot-out.



(Kansas State Historical Society)

The bodies of the dead gunmen were first simply dumped in a heap in the town jail. The next morning, they were placed on a hay wagon and photographed. There are many different versions, with the bodies in different positions. The inset photo shows Emmett Dalton, who was seriously wounded, but survived to serve a 14-year jail sentence.

Questions for Photos 4

1. Why do you think the people of Coffeyville would treat dead bodies in this way? What does it indicate about their feelings for the Dalton gang members?

2. Why do you think this photo was made?

3. No photographs of the bodies of Coffeyville citizens killed during the robbery appear to have been taken. Why do you think that was so?

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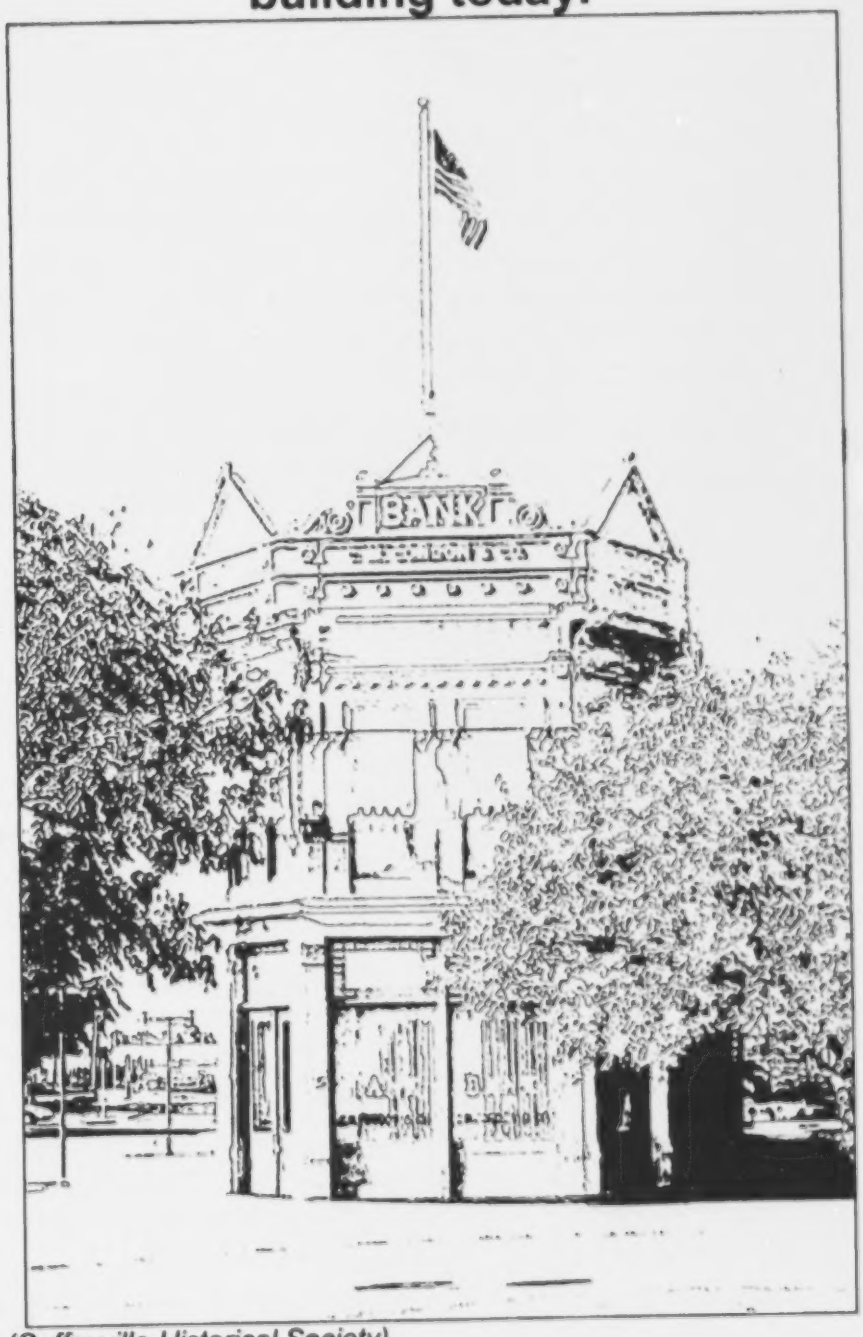
Visual Evidence

Photo 5: The Condon National Bank building today.



(Coffeyville Historical Society)

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The Condon National Bank occupied this building until 1953, when a real estate office moved in. In the 1970s, the city purchased the building. In 1992 the building was restored to appear as it did at the time of the attempted robbery. The bullet holes from the gunfight were lost in the restoration.

Questions for Photo 5

1. Compare Photo 5 with Photo 1. Can you identify any changes that have taken place? Which view makes the building appear more substantial?

2. Why do you think the building was restored in the year 1992?

3. Do you think sites related to conflict and violence should be preserved? Why or why not? Discuss your answer with your classmates.

Putting It All Together

In this lesson, students learn how a tradition of outlawry developed in Kansas and how people in Coffeyville fought back. The following activities will help them apply what they have learned.

Activity 1: The Myth of the Outlaw

Remind students that robbers of trains, express wagons, and banks became part of the mythological West. Their exploits appeared in such traveling exhibitions as "Buffalo Bill" Cody's Wild West Show, as well as in newspapers, dime novels, and movies. People flocked to Coffeyville to see the bodies of the Dalton gang and the bullet holes in the Condon Bank. The day after the failed robbery, the Topeka, Kansas, paper featured a long, inaccurate, romanticized story and newspapers all over the country reproduced the photo of the bank included here as Photo 2. At least two movies have been made based on the Dalton Gang, one with Emmett Dalton, having served his prison sentence, playing himself. Ask students to imagine that they are young people who came to Coffeyville after the robbery. Ask them to write a letter to a friend in the east describing why they went, what they saw, and how they felt about it.

Students may also want to do some research on famous villains, such as Billy the Kid, Jesse James, the Younger Gang, John Dillinger, Charles Manson, "Son of Sam," or someone more recently in the news. The students can then report back to the class on their careers and the coverage they received in the news media. Next, ask students how the media treated these people. Did they describe lawbreakers as glamorous or romantic? If not, what comments did they make about them? Compare the way the media covered recent crimes with the newspaper coverage of the Coffeyville robbery. In what ways were the crimes the same or different? How was the media treatment the same or different?

Activity 2: Taking the Law into Our Own Hands

Explain to students that in its early history, Kansans suffered from groups that decided to take the law into their own hands. Pro-slavery and anti-slavery groups killed innocent people before and during the Civil War. Quantrill's renegade militia used the war as an excuse to kill without mercy. Later, in Coffeyville, Kansas, and elsewhere, citizens armed themselves against outlaw gangs and stopped them. In some towns, criminals were tried and convicted in the street and hanged immediately--lynched--without a legal trial. Ask students under what circumstances people feel justified in taking the law into their own hands? What are the dangers in doing so? Are there alternatives? Divide the class into two teams. Have them debate the proposition: "It is never acceptable for citizens to take the law into their own hands." Have each team develop their argument and

rebuttal strategy. If possible, invite other classes and community members to judge the debate.

Activity 3: Famous Events in the Community

Explain to students that for Coffeyville, Kansas, the unsuccessful robbery of the Condon Bank was one of the most important events in its history. The city went to considerable expense to restore the bank to its appearance in 1892, and it and the Dalton Defenders Museum continue to be important tourist attractions. Ask students to talk to older people in their community to determine whether any famous event (local, regional, or national) such as a natural disaster, a political contest, a strike or riot, a famous trial, or a sensational crime occurred there. Have them research local newspapers to see how the event was covered. They may be able to check newspapers from other cities to find out whether the story received national publicity. Hold a class discussion about whether the event should be commemorated in some way, either by preserving places associated with it or by erecting a memorial. What should the memorial look like? What should it say?

Coffeyville, Kansas:
The Town That Stopped the Dalton Gang--
Supplementary Resources

By studying *Coffeyville, Kansas: The Town That Stopped the Dalton Gang* students learn how the ordinary people of a growing town in Kansas united to stop violent behavior that had once been tacitly accepted. Those interested in learning more will find that the Internet offers a variety of interesting materials.

Library of Congress

http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/features/timeline/riseind/west/west.html

The American Memory Collection Learning Page includes a section on the American West, 1865-1900 with useful material on westward expansion and life on the Great Plains. It also contains information on cowboys and outlaws and the myths that grew up around both groups.

Coffeyville Historical Society

www.coffeyville.com/Historical%20Society.htm

Visit the Coffeyville Historical Society website for information on the Dalton Defenders Museum and the Brown Mansion in Coffeyville, Kansas. The museum offers exhibits on early Coffeyville history as well as mementos of the Dalton Raid (including recently located court records of Emmett's trial).

Kansas State Historical Society http://www.kshs.org/perspect/stat1900.htm

The Historical Society website contains a time line on Kansas history that provides a useful context for Coffeyville and the Daltons. It also includes more detail on William Quantrill and the 1863 raid on Lawrence.

PBS: New Perspectives on the West http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/

The PBS series on the West includes episodes on "Bleeding Kansas" and the outlaws that grew from the lawlessness of the Civil War period and on the railroads and their influence on the Great Plains.

Texas Rangers and Outlaws

http://castor.tsl.state.tx.us/treasures/law/index.html

The Texas State Library & Archives Commission website contains material dealing with outlaws like Sam Bass and Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow and the Texas rangers who captured them.

World-Wide Web Virtual Library

http://raven.cc.ukans.edu/~kansite/WEST/media.htm

This bibliographical web site includes a section on the portrayal of the American West in media and music, with links to articles, on-line books and documents, movies, music, and other media.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
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